Author of Creation, hear our prayer
as your Son heard the plea
of the criminal crucified with him.
Gather into Christ's holy reign
the broken, the sorrowing, and the sinner,
that all may know wholeness,
joy, and forgiveness.
Amen.



OPENING PRAYER

The Story of the People of God
ORDINARY TIME
JUN. JUL. AUG. SEP. OCT. NOV.

THE GOOD/BEAUTIFUL YOU

You Have a ***Soul*** and a ***Sacred Body***

You Are ***Desired*** and ***Loved***

You Are ***Made for God***

You Are ***Forgiven***, Have Been
Made ***Alive***, and Are ***Holy***

You Have a ***Sacred Story***,
You Are ***Called***, and
You Will Be ***Glorified***



I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.



Whenever you come into my thoughts
I give thanks to my Creator. I always pray
with a glad heart when I send up prayers
for you, because from the first day until
now we have walked side by side in the
telling of the good story. I have no doubts
that the one who set your feet on this
good path will keep walking it with you
until the day that Creator Sets Free,
the Chosen One, appears.




Scenes From an
Italian Restaurant

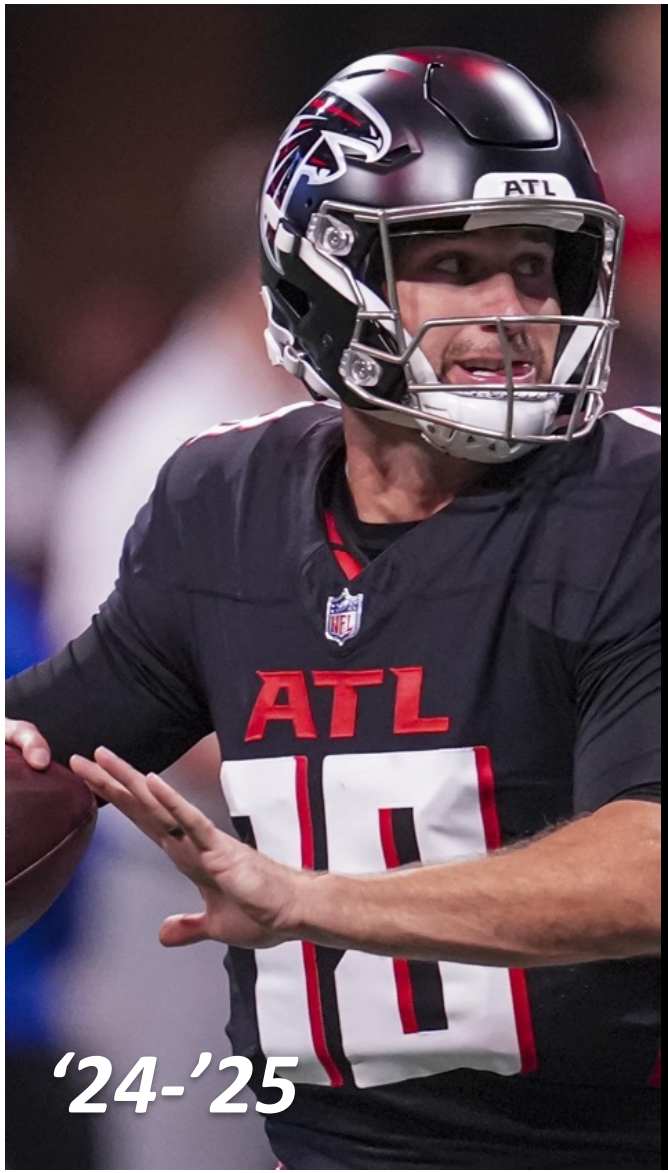

American
Pie


The
Boxer


‘67-’79

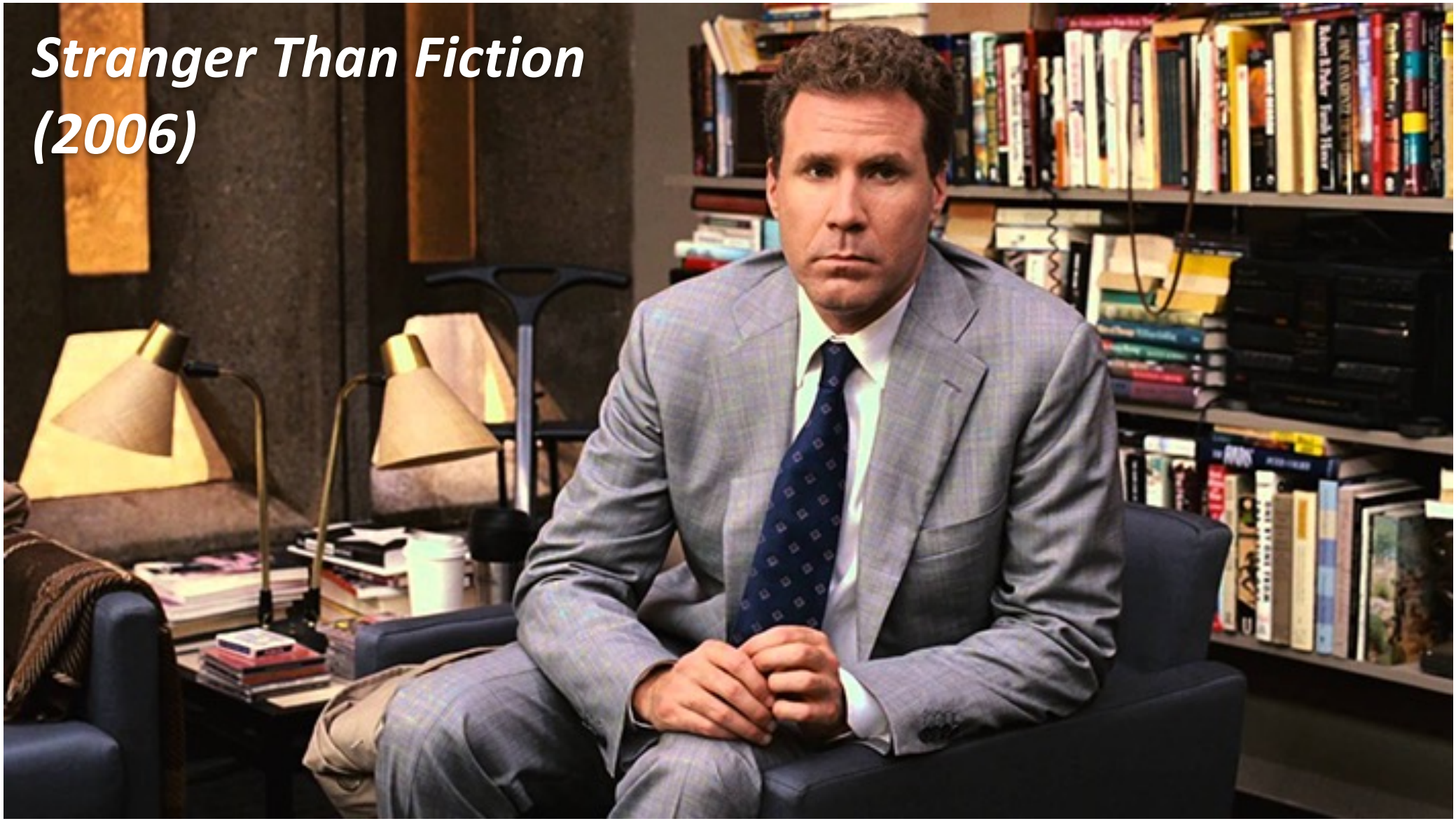

’84-’85


10.29.23
(MN 24 – GB 10)
VIKINGS
8
EQUIPMENT DEPT.


ATL
ATL
'24-'25

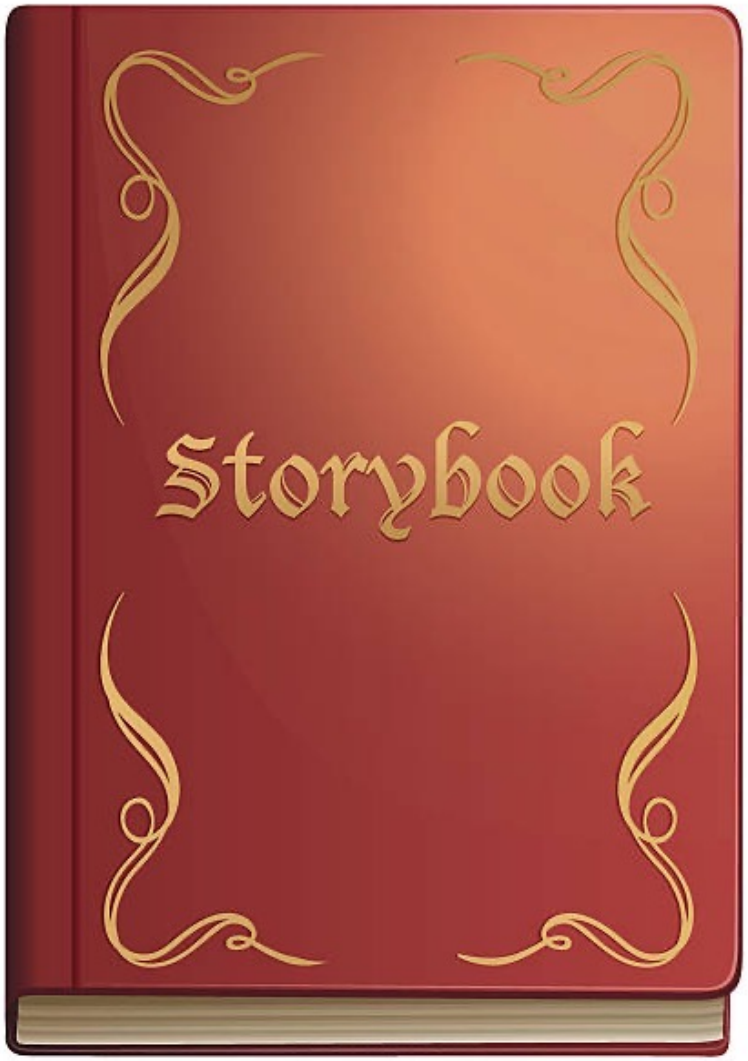

RAIDERS
'26


VIKINGS
8
11.15.26
(MN 30 – GB 10)


Stranger Than Fiction
(2006)

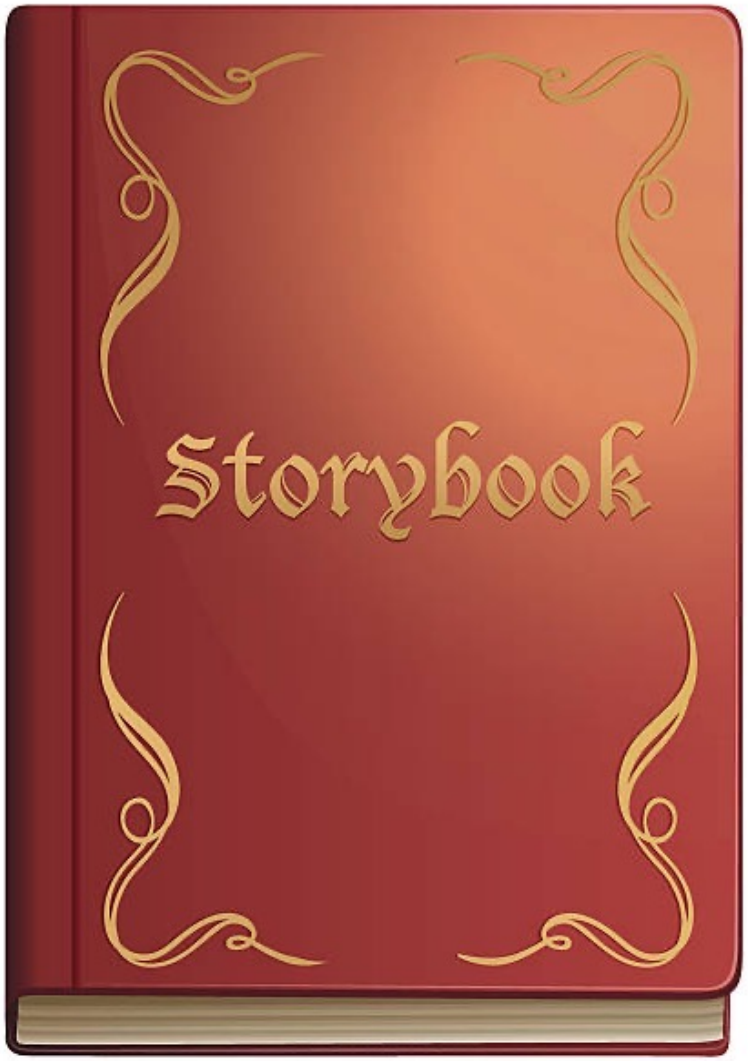
THE SEVEN BASIC PLOTS…

1. Defeat the Monster ***Arachnophobia***
2. Rags-to-Riches ***Knives Out***
3. The Quest ***The Lord of the Rings***
4. Voyage and Return ***The Odyssey***
5. Comedy ***Clue***
6. Tragedy ***Titanic***
7. Rebirth ***The Matrix***

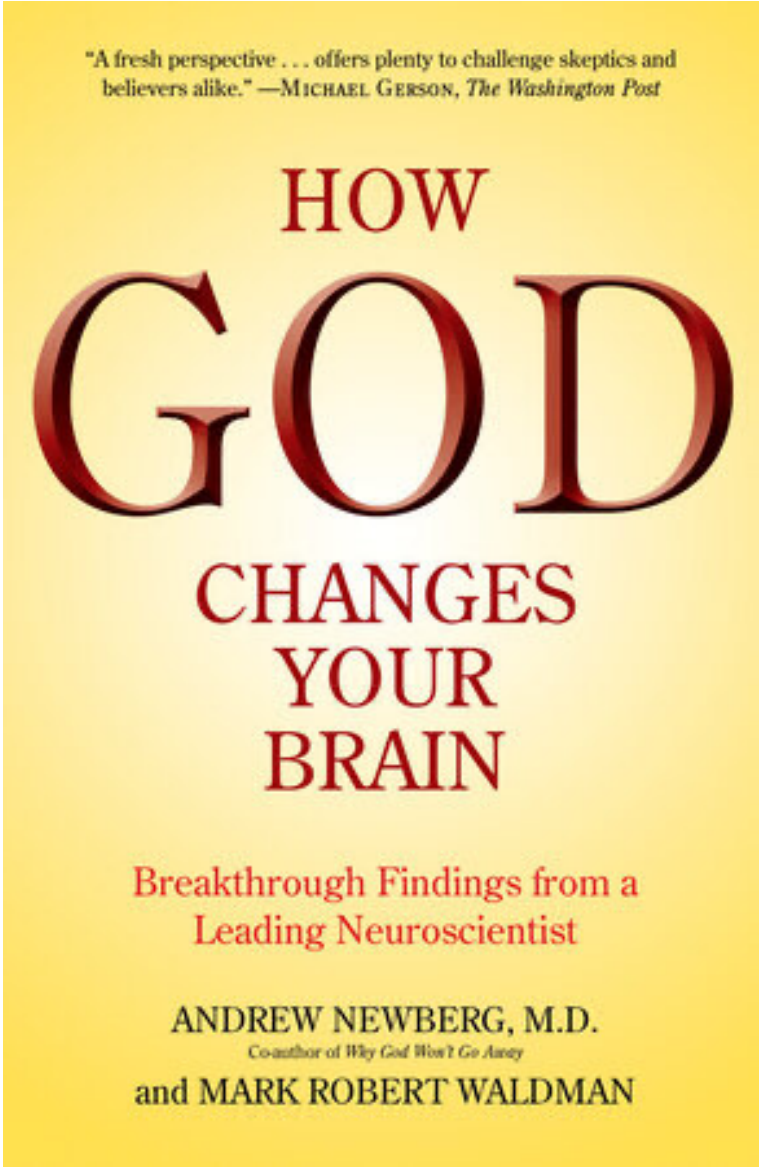


THE POWER of STORY

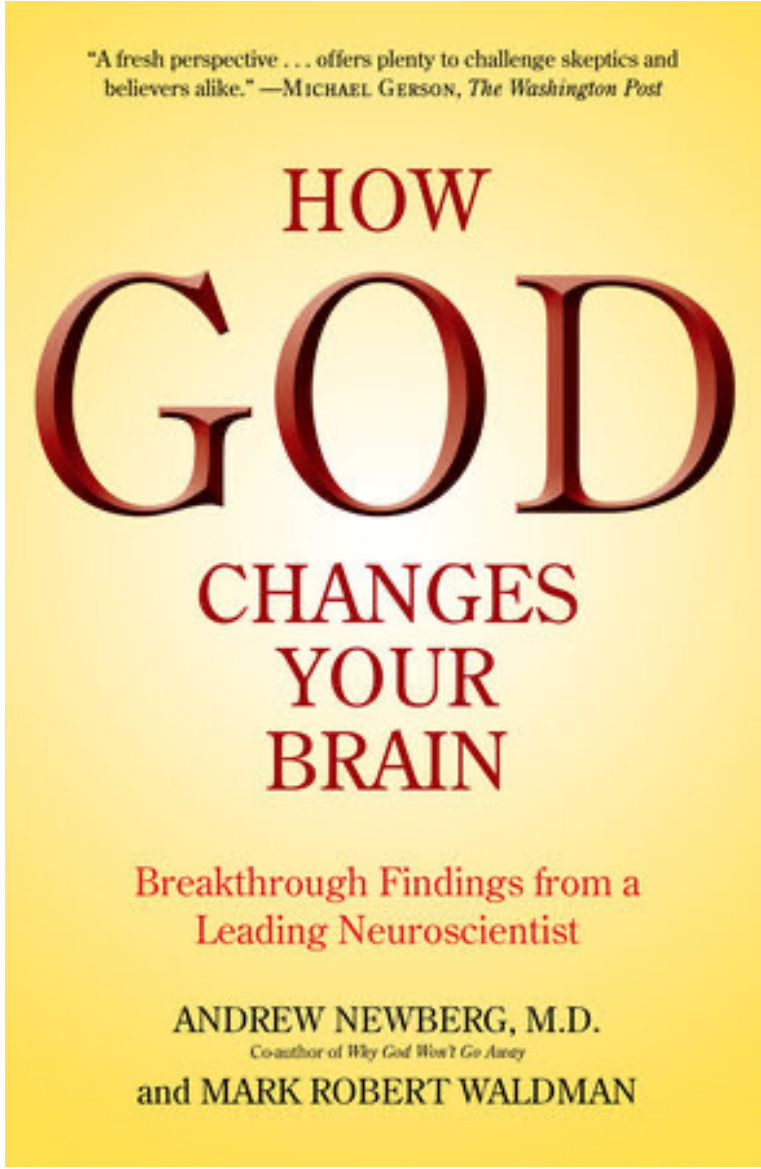
- Help our minds stay focused
- Can literally change/rewire our brain chemistry (better/worse)
- Impact our feelings/actions in ways basic facts cannot



Contemplative practices (when rooted in love) stimulate activity in the anterior cingulate, thus helping a person become more sensitive to the feelings of others. Indeed, meditating on… God's love appears to strengthen the…neurological circuits that allow us to feel compassion towards others.



In contrast, religious activities (or stories) that focus on fear may damage (the brain), and when this happens, a person will often lose interest in other people's concerns, or act aggressively towards them.



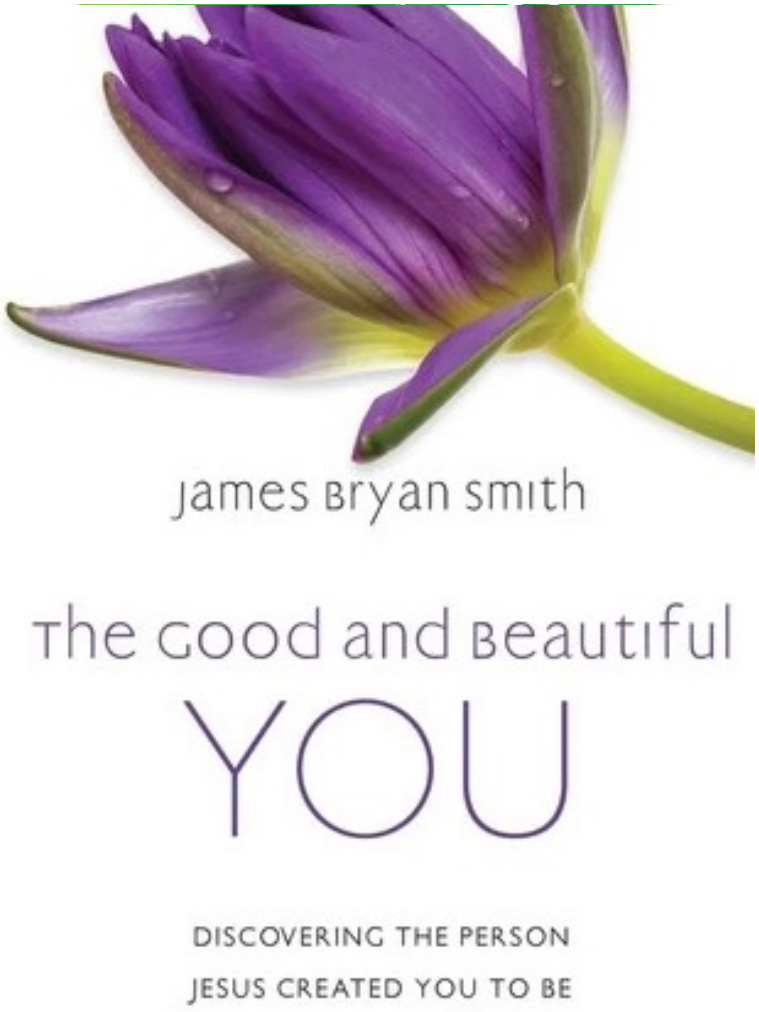
People who focus on God's love develop thicker, richer gray matter (in their brains.) This development offers them better focus, concentration, compassion and empathy. They have lower stress levels/blood pressure, it's easier for them to forgive themselves and others, and it elevates capacity to take riskes…



FALSE NARRATIVE

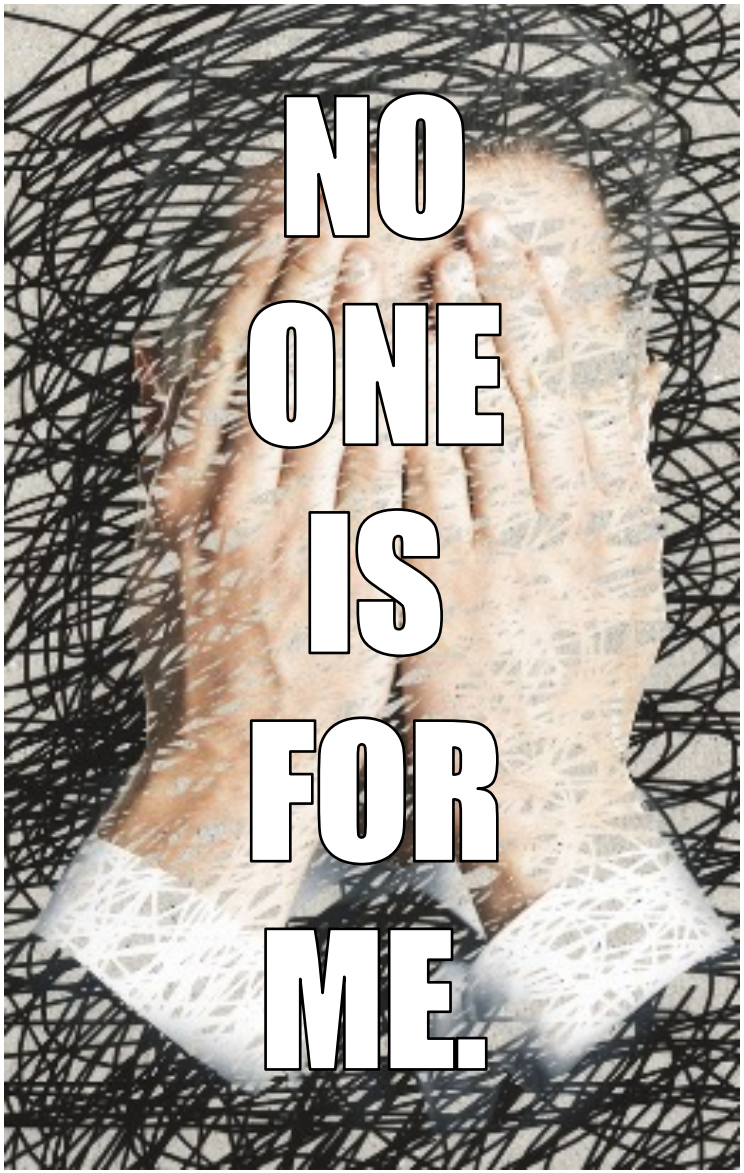
I am either (a) what others have done to me, or (b) my past has nothing to do with me

- Ultimize ***My story is all that I am***
- Minimize ***I must escape/ignore my story***



TWO TYPES of TRAUMA

1. **Aggressive Assault**
   - Physical
   - Sexual
   - Verbal
2. **Passive Withdrawal**
   - Lack of connection
   - Lack of interest
   - Lack of presence



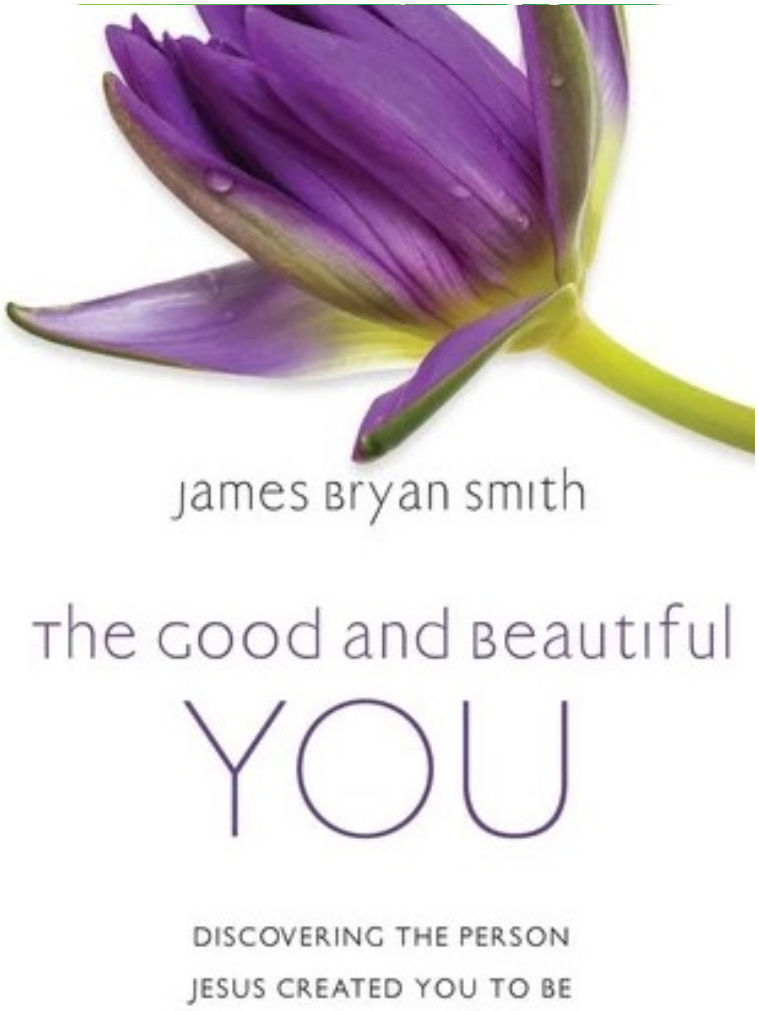
FALSE NARRATIVE

I am either (a) what others have done to me, or (b) my past has nothing to do with me

TRUE NARRATIVE

I have a unique, God-ordained life

- Does NOT mean everything that happens is part of God's plan!



And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.
And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.



ROM
8:28-30
NIV

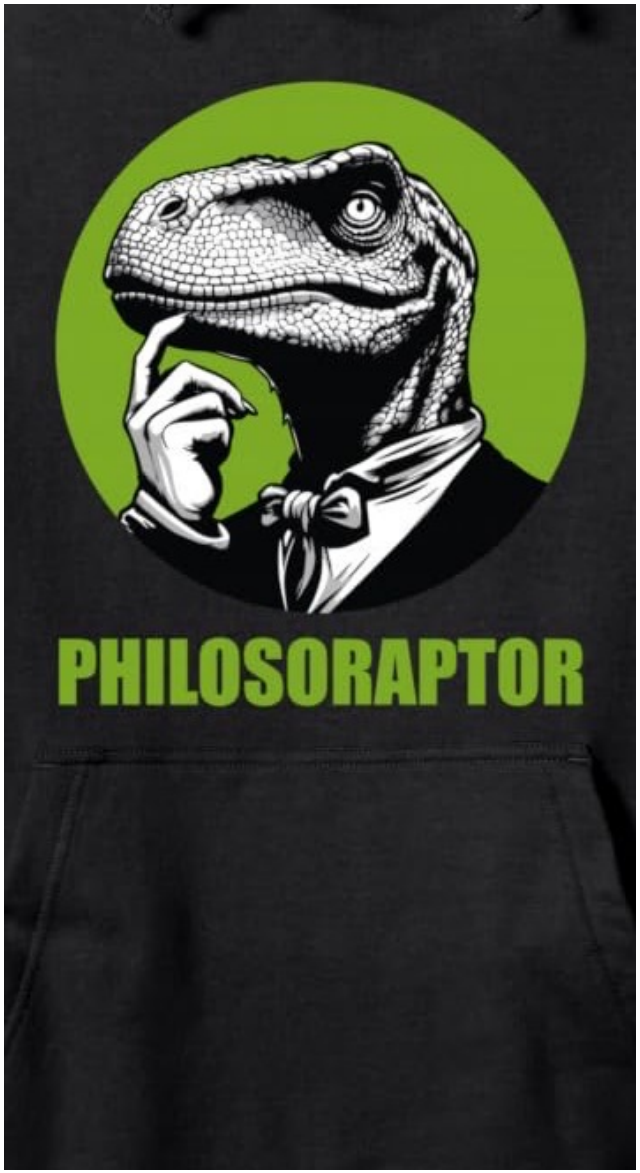
In all these things, Creator is working to bring good to the ones who love him, the ones he chose according to his ancient purpose. For he knew long ago what kind of people he would choose. He decided ahead of time to make them to be like his firstborn Son …The Great Spirit chose them, invited them, set them right with him, and gave them a life that shines with beauty and honor.



TWO QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What kind of narratives do I believe about God and myself?

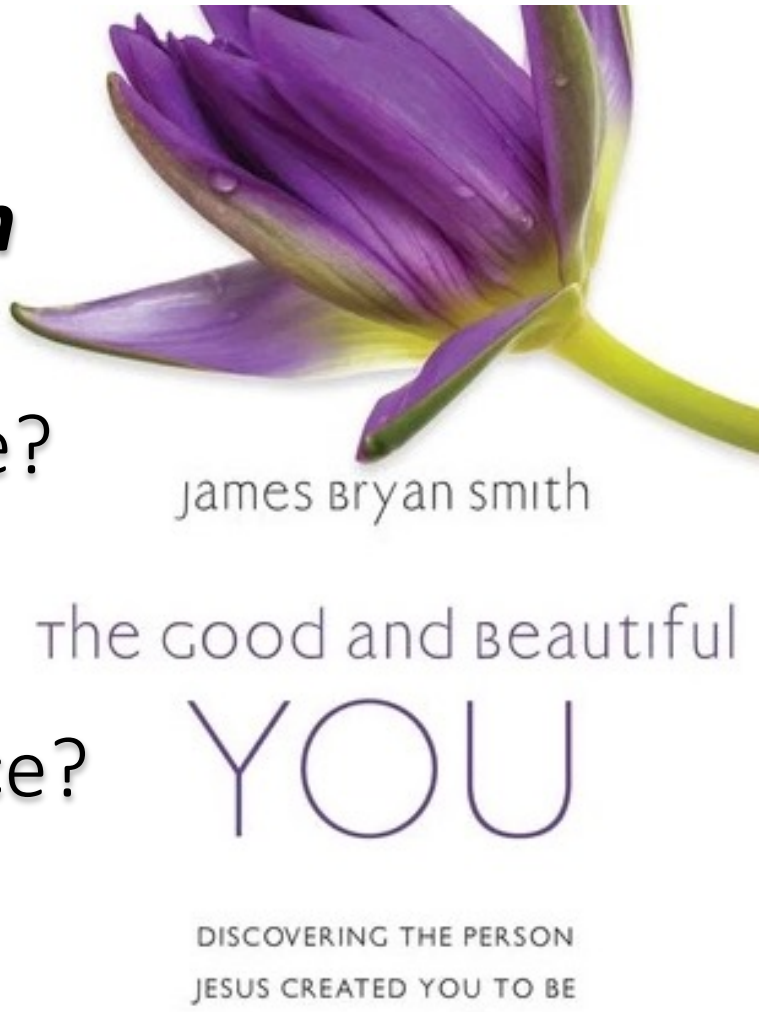
2. Are those narratives true?



SOUL TRAINING EXERCISE

Step 1: Recall a Divine Connection

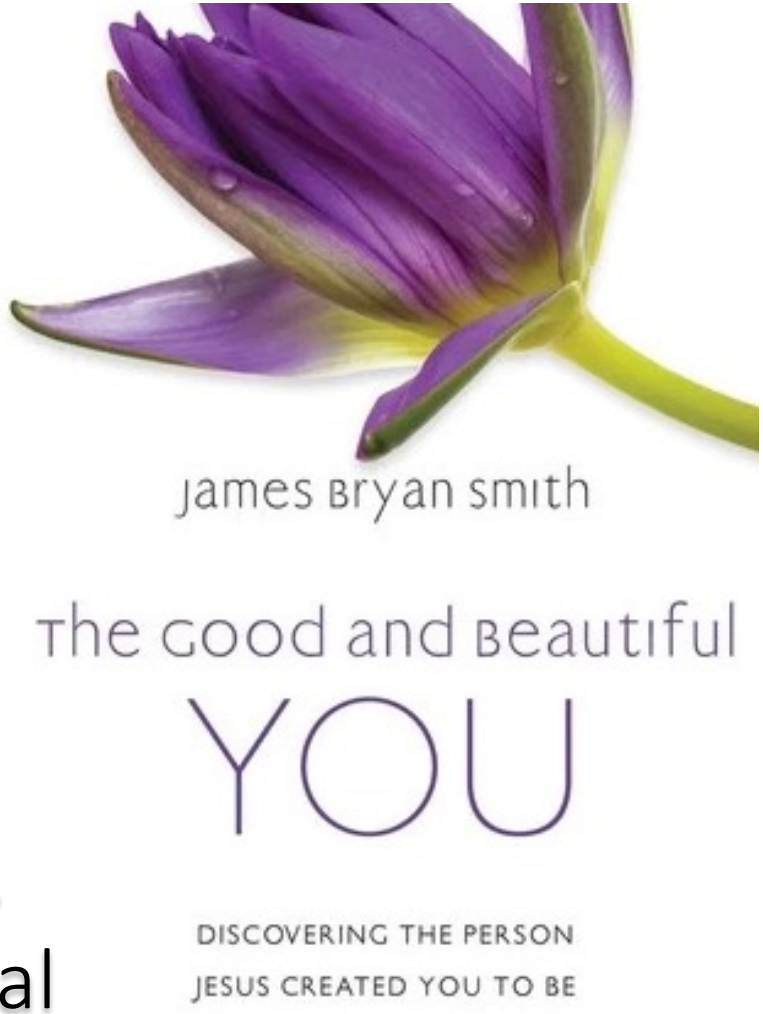
- Remember/enjoy if you can
- What did your senses experience?
- How did your body feel?
- What emotions does this elicit?
- How do you sense God's presence?
- Rest in this for a few minutes



SOUL TRAINING EXERCISE

Step 2: Asking Jesus, Pt.1

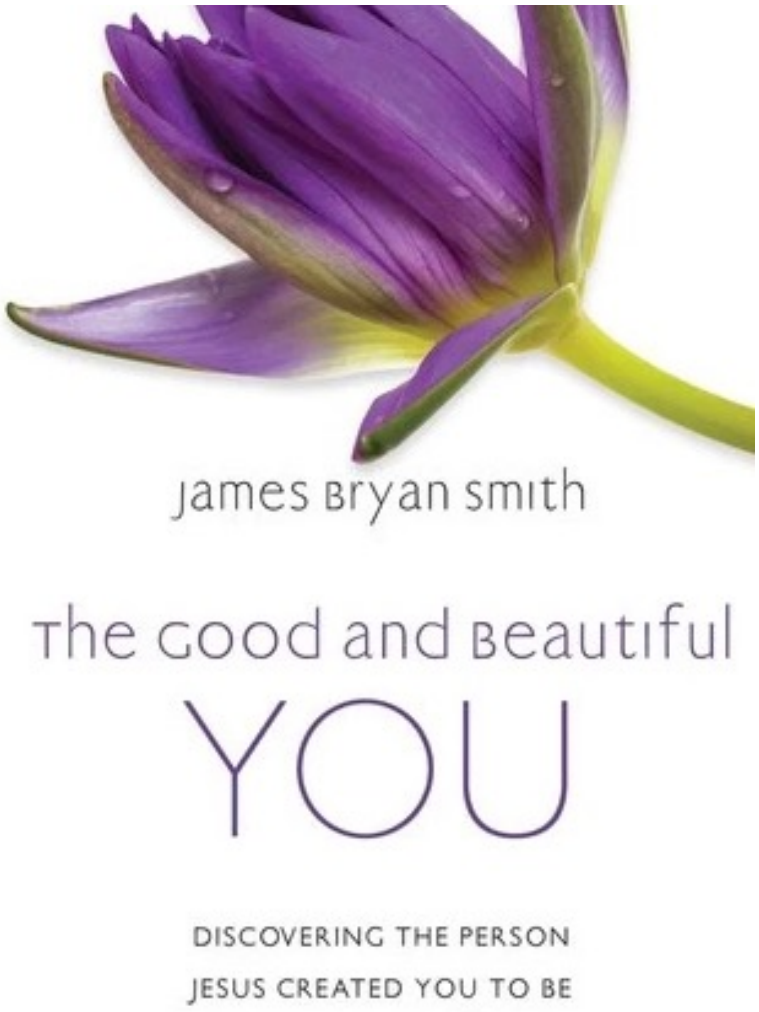
- How has my self-perception been shaped by others, either through assault or withdrawal?
- Journal about any specific experiences that come to mind
- If these seem too overwhelming, walk through this w/a professional



SOUL TRAINING EXERCISE

Step 3: Asking Jesus, Pt.2

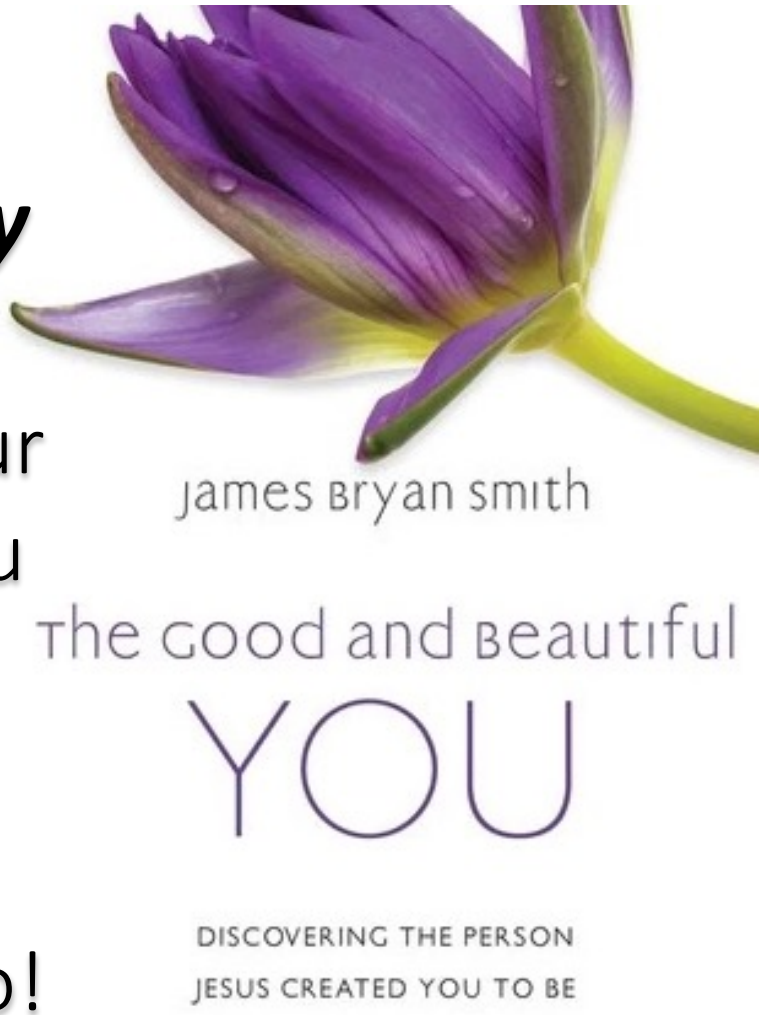
- Are there any false, deeply held beliefs about myself that I keep struggling with as a result…?
- Journal about any specific experiences that come to mind
- Not all false beliefs are easy to identify, so be at peace if none come to mind at first…



SOUL TRAINING EXERCISE

Step 4: Let Jesus Re-Tell Your Story

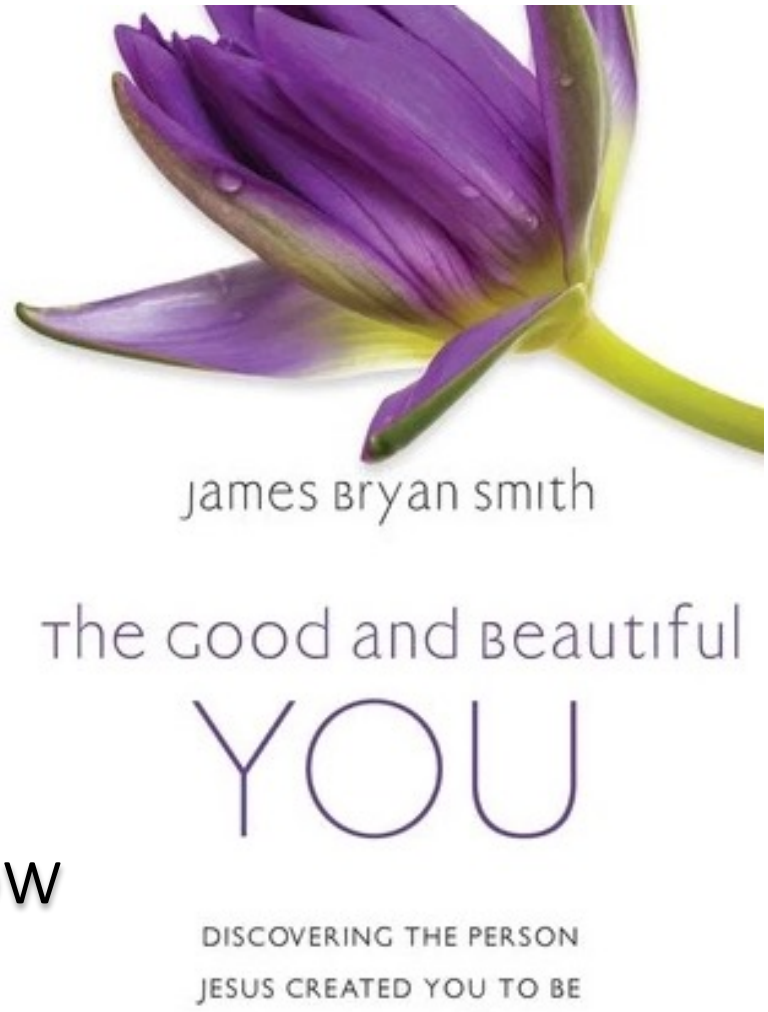
- Ask Jesus for his perspective, where he was in the midst of your story, what he believes about you
- Ask him to replace any lies you have carried with the truth
- Consider walking through this with a professional if you need to!



SOUL TRAINING EXERCISE

Step 5: Re-Tell Your Story

- After completing Steps 1-4, share your story with a trusted person/professional
- Share whatever you feel safe to share about your experience
- Share your false belief(s), and how Jesus is re-telling your story
- Make room for listener questions



You raised up your Son, O God, and seated him
at your right hand as the shepherd and king
who seeks what is lost, binds up what is wounded,
and strengthens what is weak.
Empowered by the Spirit, grant that we
may share with others that which we have received
from your hand, to the honor of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



CLOSING PRAYER